

PRIZE  
GROUP

NOW MONTHLY!

FEBRUARY No. 21

10¢

# BLACK MAGIC

TRUE AMAZING  
ACCOUNTS OF THE  
STRANGEST STORIES  
EVER TOLD!

*magazine*

THERE'S SOMETHING  
**UNNATURAL** ABOUT  
THE PEOPLE IN THIS  
STRANGE, OLD TOWN!  
THEY PLAY **TOO HARD**--  
AS IF THEY'RE JAMMING  
A HUNDRED YEARS  
OF LIVING INTO  
24 HOURS!

AH! THEN YOU  
HAVE NOT READ  
THE LEGEND! COME!  
**BE ONE OF US--  
AND NEVER DIE!**





## The image is a dense collage of vintage comic book covers, primarily from the mid-20th century. The covers are arranged in a grid-like fashion, overlapping slightly. Titles visible include "Superman", "Jetta", "Mystery Comics", "Fantastic Tales", "Cosmo Cat", "Startling Comics", "Strange Mysteries", "Daring Adventures", "Famous Funnies", "Hilarious Raucous", "Teen-Age Sweetheart", "Duck", "Eerie", "Exciting Comics", "Casper Cat", and "Barnyard Comics". The art style is characteristic of classic American comics, with bold colors and dynamic illustrations. Overlaid on top of this collage is a large, dark purple speech bubble with a thick black outline. Inside the bubble, the text "WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM" is written in a large, white, stylized font with a slight shadow effect, making it stand out prominently against the background of comic books.



# BLACK MAGIC

The archaeologist hunted a legend--instead, he found--

## The FEATHERED SERPENT

GET BACK, YOU DEVIL! THIS IS THE FETISH DEVIL THAT BEARS YOUR NAME! IF YOU EXIST-- SO DO ITS POWERS TO DESTROY YOU!

Produced by  
SIMON & KIRBY

"I SUPPOSE MY STORY REALLY STARTS WITH THE DAY I DECIDED TO MAKE ARCHAEOLOGY MY LIFE'S WORK. BUT IT WAS NOT UNTIL I HAD GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY WITH HONORS IN SOUTHWESTERN ARCHAEOLOGY, AND ACCEPTED A POSITION AS CUSTODIAN AND RESIDENT ARCHAEOLOGIST AT THE INDIAN RUINS OF HAWAKEHU, THAT THE SERIES OF EVENTS WHICH CULMINATED IN THIS HORRIFYING EXPERIENCE TOOK PLACE.

CONGRATULATIONS, CASSIDY, I'M SURE YOU'LL GO FAR IN YOUR CHOSEN PROFESSION. HOWEVER, I'VE HEARD YOU'RE TAKING THE POSITION AT THE HAWAKEHU RUINS, NOW-- IF I MAY SUGGEST--

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY, PROFESSOR BARNES, YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME *NOT* TO TAKE THE JOB! YOU SEE, I KNOW ABOUT THE BIG TABOO EXISTING THERE!

BUT, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THE STORIES ARE ALL A LOT OF NONSENSE. BESIDES, THE RUINS NEED *INVESTIGATING*, AND THE REMAINING NATIVES THERE NEED HELP!

THAT'S TRUE, BUT I FEEL IT MY DUTY TO REMIND YOU OF THE THREE MEN WHO WERE FOUND *DEAD* IN THOSE RUINS. TWO STUDENTS DOING RESEARCH-- A FOREST RANGER WHO SERVED FOR THEM--

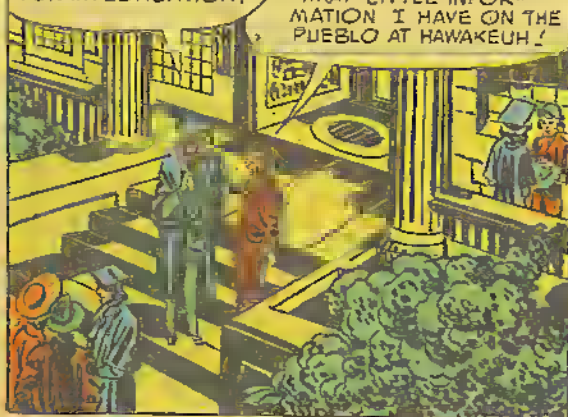




# BLACK MAGIC

OKAY! SO THERE HAS BEEN SOME FUNNY GOINGS ON DOWN THERE ON THE BANKS OF THE RIO MUERTO! I SAY ALL THE MORE REASON FOR INVESTIGATION!

AH, YOUTH! WELL, SINCE I CAN'T PERSUADE YOU DIFFERENTLY, COME TO MY HOUSE, TONIGHT AND I'LL GIVE YOU WHAT LITTLE INFORMATION I HAVE ON THE PUEBLO AT HAWAKEUH!



"WITHIN A HALF HOUR I WAS SEATED IN THE SPACIOUS THOUGH LITTERED STUDY OF PROFESSOR BARNES!

I'LL BE BRIEF...AND TO THE POINT, CASSIDY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE IN THOSE RUINS! BUT MY NOTION IS THAT HAWAKEUH MAY NOT BE THE DEAD RELIC IT SEEMS!

JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT, SIR?



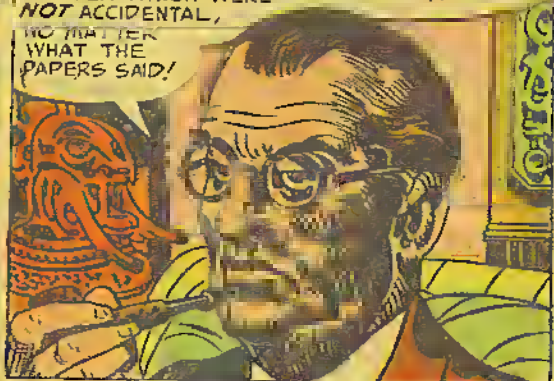
"THAT NIGHT I WALKED ACROSS THE CAMPUS... MY MIND FILLED WITH MANY QUESTIONS!

PROFESSOR BARNES ISN'T KIDDING ABOUT THIS HAWAKEUH MYSTERY! HE KNOWS MORE ABOUT THOSE RUINS THAN ANY LIVING MAN! IF THERE'S DANGER THERE, I'D BE WISE TO TAKE WHAT HE HAS TO SAY MORE SERIOUSLY!



LITTLE THINGS FOR THE MOST PART... THE ATTITUDE OF THE SAVAGES WHO STILL LIVE IN THE HABITABLE PORTION OF THE PUEBLO... STRANGE MARKS AND DESIGNS FOUND NEWLY SCRATCHED OR SCRIBBLED ON WALLS... ANIMALS FOUND DEAD AND ODDLY MUTILATED... THE DEATH OF THE COLLEGE MEN AND THE RANGER WHICH WERE NOT ACCIDENTAL,

NO MATTER WHAT THE PAPERS SAID!



ALL RIGHT, SO SOMETHING STRANGE IS GOING ON! HAVE YOU ANY IDEAS AS TO WHAT IT MIGHT BE?

YES AND NO! SEE THERE! YOU KNOW THE HISTORY OF THE RUINS... HOW THEY WERE FIRST DISCOVERED BY CORANADO IN 1541... HOW EVEN AT THAT TIME HE DESCRIBED THEM AS INCREDIBLY OLD...



SO THERE ARE THE RUINS... OLDER BY FAR THAN ANY OF THE OTHER IN A REGION OF RUINS! COULD IT BE THAT IN OR AROUND HAWAKEUH THERE STILL EXISTS SOME ELEMENT, SOME PORTION, OF THINGS LEFT OVER FROM AN OLDER RACE, A PREHISTORIC RACE?

PROFESSOR BARNES! YOU ARE NOT TALKING LIKE A SCIENTIST! BUT MORE LIKE A WRITER IN THE SUNDAY SUPPLEMENTS!





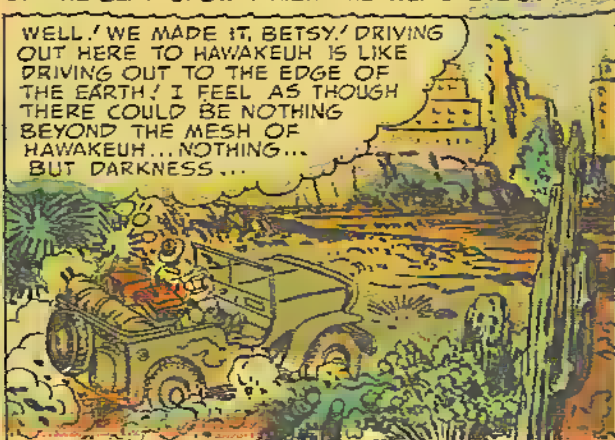
# BLACK MAGIC

PERHAPS, BUT, REMEMBER, CASSIDY! I'M AN OLD MAN! I'VE SEEN A LOT OF STRANGE PLACES... STRANGE SIGHTS! AND I'VE LEARNED NEVER TO COMPLETELY ACCEPT EXPLANATIONS... EVEN IF THEY ARE LABELLED "SCIENTIFIC!"



"SOBERED BY MY TALK WITH PROFESSOR BARNES, I NEVERTHELESS LOOKED FORWARD ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO HAWAKEUH AND GETTING STARTED ON MY JOB THERE. A MONTH LATER, I WAS DRIVING MY JEEP UP THE LAST, SANDY INCLINE THAT LED TO THE BASE OF THE CLIFF UPON WHICH THE RUINS STOOD."

WELL! WE MADE IT, BETSY! DRIVING OUT HERE TO HAWAKEUH IS LIKE DRIVING OUT TO THE EDGE OF THE EARTH! I FEEL AS THOUGH THERE COULD BE NOTHING BEYOND THE MESH OF HAWAKEUH... NOTHING... BUT DARKNESS...



I KNEW IT WAS HOT HERE BUT CERTAINLY NOT THIS HOT! AT LEAST THE STATE HAS HAD TIME TO BUILD ME A SHACK! IN THIS HEAT IT WILL BE A HUNDRED PERCENT BETTER THAN A TENT!



AH! THE WELCOMING COMMITTEE!

WHY DO YOU COME HERE? WE DO NOT WANT YOU! WHY SHOULD THERE BE A CUSTODIAN FOR HAWAKEUH... WHICH NEEDS NO WATCHING!

I GREET MY BROTHERS, IN FRIENDSHIP! I AM THE NEW CUSTODIAN!



THIS DUTY IS THE HERITAGE OF THE PEOPLE OF HAWAKEUH... AND NO OTHERS! GO, WHITE MAN! GO!

NOW, HOLD ON BOYS, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! HAWAKEUH IS A STATE MONUMENT! YOU... IF ANYONE... ARE THE TRESPASSERS!



"SUDDENLY THE SULLEN WARRIORS OF HAWAKEUH LANCED THEMSELVES AT ME IN AN ATTEMPT TO HURL ME OFF THE CLIFF! I FOUGHT BACK LIKE A WILDCAT!"

NO, YOU DON'T, BOYS! I'M PLANNING ON STAYING HERE... ALIVE!





# BLACK MAGIC

"A COMBINED KNOWLEDGE OF BOXING, WRESTLING AND JIU JITSU FINALLY GAVE ME THE EDGE! THOSE PUEBLO JUST COULDN'T COPE WITH IT! I HAD THEM YELLING 'UNCLE!'"

SORRY, PAL... LET'S FORGET ALL THIS NONSENSE! I'D LIKE TO GET ALONG WITH YOU PEOPLE. I'VE WORK TO DO HERE AND I'LL NEED YOUR HELP!

YOU STRUCK ME, WHITE MAN! YOU STRUCK A PRIEST OF IKISA ITSEN!



"IT WAS LUCKY FOR ME THAT I HAD! BUT HE COULDN'T SEE IT THAT WAY! THE HOSTILITY REMAINED-- I COULD STILL FEEL IT--EVEN IN THE SHACK."

PROBABLY THE FIRST THING ON MY PROGRAM OUGHT TO BE A THOROUGH AND SYSTEMATIC EXPLORATION OF THE ENTIRE RUINS--THEN I'LL KNOW WHERE TO START THE REAL DIGGING!



"EARLY THE NEXT MORNING I STARTED WORK AT THE NORTHERN END OF THE PILE OF MUD, STONE AND DEBRIS THAT WAS THE PUEBLO OF HAWAKEUH.

GUESS HERE'S AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY TO START, IT'S REALLY A DESOLATE PLACE, AT LEAST THE ALTITUDE IS TOO HIGH FOR SNAKES.



WHEW! NOTHING ALIVE HAS BEEN IN HERE FOR CENTURIES! EXCEPT, MAYBE A LIZARD OR A HORNED TOAD. SMELLS LIKE A GRAVE AND LOOKS LIKE ONE. LET'S SEE, NOW-- SAY! WHAT'S THAT LYING IN THE RUBBLE--



I'LL BE MY DADDIE'S DUTCH UNCLE --FROM THE LOOKS OF THIS, THERE WAS ONCE A SNAKE CULT HERE IN HAWAKEUH! BUT ACCORDING TO ALL THE AUTHORITIES A SNAKE CULT HAS EXISTED WITHIN A THOUSAND MILES OF THIS TERRITORY!



BOY! I'LL SAY THESE RUINS NEED INVESTIGATION. THE VERY FIRST MORNING I DIG AROUND A LITTLE, I COME UPON SOMETHING THAT COULD EASILY MAKE THE ENTIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION SIT UP AND TAKE NOTICE!





# BLACK MAGIC

"AT THAT MOMENT, I SENSED A MOVEMENT OUT OF THE CORNER OF MY EYE... AND WHEELED... CATCHING A MOMENTARY GLIMPSE OF THE SPYING INDIANS!"

OH/OH/ THESE RASCALS ARE KEEPING TABS ON ME! WHATEVER THEIR REASONS ARE... IT COULD MEAN TROUBLE!



"THE BALANCE OF THE DAY PASSED UN-EVENTFULLY! I UNCOVERED A GOODLY NUMBER OF RELICS, BUT NOTHING LIKE THAT SNAKE FETISH! THAT NIGHT AFTER RAIDING THE FOOD IN MY KNAPSACK, I PUT ON A JACKET AND SAT UNDER THE COOL SKY OF THE PUEBLO!"

BOOM!  
BOOM!  
BOOM!

DRUMS! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THERE WERE ENOUGH INDIANS LEFT HERE ABOUT TO HOLD ANY MORE CEREMONIAL DANCES! I'D BETTER GO SEE WHAT'S UP!



THE DRUMS SEEM TO BE COMING FROM THIS DIRECTION... FROM THE AREA WHERE THE PUEBLO'S KHIVA WOULD BE LOCATED! HMM... THE KHIVA WAS THE PUEBLO'S UNDERGROUND MEETING ROOM IN WHICH THE ANCIENT PRIESTS PERFORMED STRANGE RITES BEFORE THEIR ANIMAL GODS!

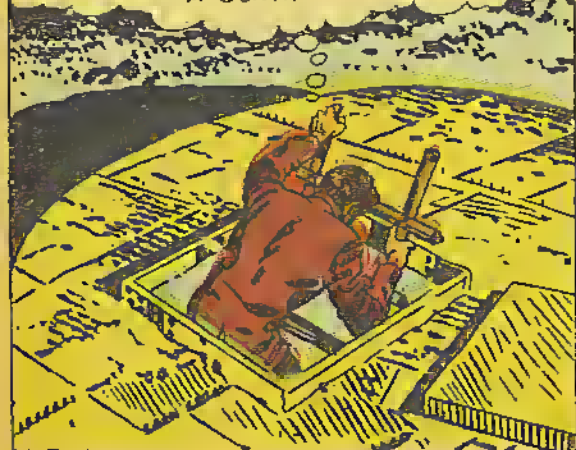


THERE'S THE KHIVA, ALL RIGHT! AND, IT LOOKS IN EXCELLENT REPAIR... ALMOST AS THOUGH IT WERE STILL IN USE... BUT... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

BOOM-  
BOOMA-BOOM!  
BOOMA-BOOM!  
BOOM-



IT'S HARD TO TELL BUT THE DRUM BEATS SEEM TO COMING FROM THE ROOM BELOW! GOSH, IT'S DARK DOWN THERE! I'D FEEL BETTER ABOUT THIS... IF I'D BROUGHT A GUN...



"THE MOMENT MY FEET TOUCHED THE STONE BOTTOM OF THAT SUNKEN ROOM... THE LADDER WAS SWIFTLY DRAWN UPWARD BY UNSEEN HANDS AND THE HATCH COVER THROWN OVER THE OPENING ABOVE!"

HEY! WHAT'S THE IDEA? YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS...





# BLACK MAGIC

"THEN FOR A SECOND, I FELT UNREASONING TERROR AS THE UTTER DARKNESS ENFOLDED ME! THE DRUMS AND RATTLES INCREASED THEIR TEMPO UNTIL THEY BECAME A DEVIL'S SYMPHONY! THE NARROW CONFINES OF THE KHIVA SHOOK WITH SOUND!"

BUT... BUT... THERE'S NO ONE HERE! THE KHIVA'S EMPTY! WHERE ARE THE DRUMS AND THE DRUMMERS? WHERE DO THE SOUNDS COME FROM?



"SUDDENLY THE DRUMS STOPPED BEATING! AND, I KNEW TRUE TERROR! FOR THIS SUDDEN SILENCE PLAYED MORE HAVOC WITH THE NERVES THAN THE CLATTER WHICH PRECEDED IT..."

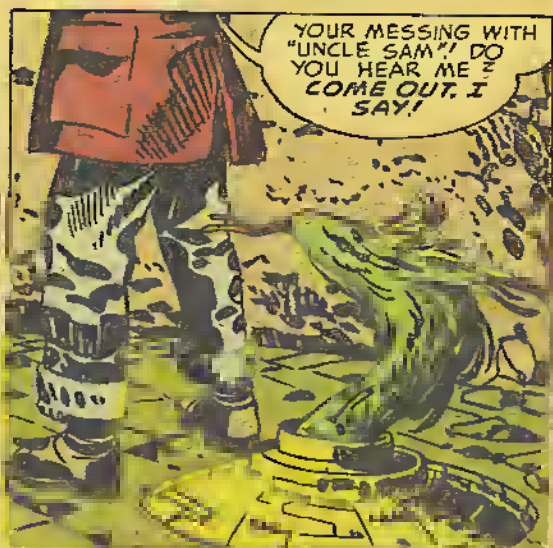
AT LEAST THE FORMER OCCUPANT LEFT HIS TORCH! NOW, ALL I'VE GOT TO DO IS GET OUT OF HERE... WITH MY HIDE INTACT... AND MY SANITY STILL IN BALANCE!



"THEN, OUT OF A GREAT SILENCE, CAME A GHOSTLY VOICE! FOR A MOMENT I COULD NOT PLACE IT... EVEN THOUGH IT SOUNDED FAMILIAR! THEN, I REALIZED IT WAS THE VOICE OF THE INDIAN I'D CLOUTED THE MORNING BEFORE!"

IKISA ITSEN! IKISA ITSEN! COME! COME UP FROM YOUR COLD NEST IN THE GROUND AND SEIZE THE ONE WHO DARES STRIKE ONE OF YOUR PRIESTS!

HEY, THERE! WHERE ARE YOU HIDING, YOU CRAZY DEVIL! COME OUT AND SHOW YOUR UGLY FACE!



YOUR MESSING WITH "UNCLE SAM"! DO YOU HEAR ME? COME OUT, I SAY!

"THE ONLY REPLY I GOT WAS THE SOUND OF MY OWN ECHOES! THEN I HEARD IT... A LOW, SINISTER HISSING... AN OBSCENE RASping, MOCKING SOUND!"

THOSE SUPERSTITIOUS FOOLS ARE ASKING FOR TROUBLE! WHAT'S THAT? THERE'S SOMETHING BEHIND ME!



"AND, THEN I SAW IT... ATTRACTED BY ITS HISSING I TURNED PARALYZED WITH FEAR, I WANTED TO SCREAM! I TRIED... BUT, ALL MY DRY THROAT WAS CAPABLE OF WAS A HOARSE CROAK! I JUST MANAGED TO LEAP OUT OF ITS PATH WHEN IT LUNGED!"

JUMPING CATFISH! THE FEATHERED SERPENT GOD! ITS... ALIVE!





# BLACK MAGIC

A DEADLY BATTLE WAS ON! AS I DARTED ERRATICALLY ABOUT, MY MIND WAS FEVERISHLY SEEKING AN AVENUE OF ESCAPE...BUT, THERE APPEARED TO BE NONE!

SAY...

THE FETISH I FOUND THIS MORNING! IF THE LEGENDS ARE TRUE... IT MAY SAVE ME!



AT LAST I SUCCEEDED IN RIPPING THE SNAKE FETISH FREE AND HELD IT UP TO CONFRONT THE MONSTER BEFORE ME! MY MIND INSTINCTIVELY KNEW EXACTLY WHAT I SHOULD SAY, THE MOTIONS I SHOULD MAKE ...

GO BACK...  
RETURN TO THE TIME  
PAST THAT SPAWNED  
YOU... GO BACK TO  
YOUR GHOSTLY  
CONVERTS!



THRUSTING THE FETISH BACK INTO MY POCKET... I BEGAN COLLECTING THE DEBRIS LYING ABOUT THE CHAMBER! I WAS SOON ABLE TO CLIMB HIGH ENOUGH ON THE HEAP TO FORCE THE COVER ON THE CEILING!

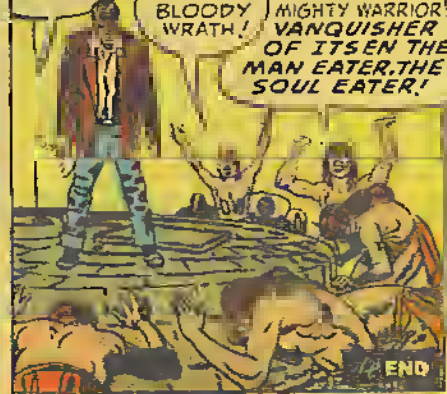


WHEN AT LAST I STEPPED FROM THE DEAD AIR OF THE KHIVA INTO THE COOL BREEZE OF THE NIGHT, I FOUND ANOTHER WELCOMING COMMITTEE!

HAIL, MASTER,  
OF IKISA  
ITSEN!

YA TAHE... NO LONGER  
MUST WE TREMBLE  
BECAUSE OF  
ITSEN'S  
BLOODY  
WRATH!

LA HAIEE...  
MIGHTY WARRIOR'S  
VANQUISHER  
OF ITSEN THE  
MAN EATER, THE  
SOUL EATER!



IT'S CAUGHT IN MY POCKET! OF ALL THE ROTTEN TIMES FOR THAT KIND OF THING TO HAPPEN!

EAT FIRE, YOU  
DEMON! I'M NOT  
HELPLESS YET!



THEN IT WAS ALL OVER! WITH ONE LAST CONVULSIVE MOVEMENT, THE GHOSTLY CREATURE ATTEMPTED TO STRIKE AND THEN IT SIMPLY DISAPPEARED!

WHOEVER... WHATEVER...  
HELPED ME JUST NOW... WHETHER IT WAS  
THE FETISH OR SOME OTHER AGENCY FOR  
GOOD OPERATING THROUGH THE FETISH...  
I THANK YOU FOR MY LIFE!



THAT'S ABOUT IT!  
WHAT DO YOU THINK?  
WAS IT ALL BUT A  
DREAM? I THINK  
NOT! FOR THE NEXT  
DAY I RETURNED  
TO THE KHIVA...  
AND SPRAWLED  
ON AN ALTAR,  
WAS THE BODY  
OF THE PRIEST  
WHO SOUGHT  
MY DEATH! IT  
HAD BEEN A TEST  
OF POWER BETWEEN  
US... AND I HAD  
WON... THAT IS,  
WITH THE HELP  
OF THE FETISH!  
I STILL HAVE IT!  
IT'S A PRICELESS  
RELIC... AND A  
CLUE TO THE  
MYSTIC WEAPONS  
THAT PRIMITIVE MAN  
USED TO CONTROL  
HIS PREHISTORIC  
GODS!

END



# BLACK MAGIC

Perhaps it's happened to you -- you think you're alone and someone speaks to you! You hear it as clearly as you hear your own labored breathing! But no one's there! Just you and a...

## WARNING VOICE!

HARRIET! IT WAS HARRIET I HEARD! BUT HARRIET IS TWO THOUSAND MILES AWAY! YET IT WAS HER VOICE! I'M SURE OF IT!



THE APPROPRIATE WORD FOR MARVIN MILES WAS AVERAGE! THAT IS WHAT MAKES HIS EXPERIENCE SO REMARKABLE. FOR CERTAINLY, HE WAS NOT PSYCHIC, NOR ATTUNED TO THE INFINITE!

MARVIN! MARVIN!

I'LL BE RIGHT UP, HARRIET! JUST AS SOON AS I TRIM THE END OFF OF THIS PIECE OF LUMBER... IT'S -- DARN IT, IT SPLIT! IT'S ROTTEN!



MARVIN'S ANGER WAS ARRESTED BY THE SHOCK OF A SUDDEN THOUGHT. HE'D HEARD HIS WIFE -- CALLING HIS NAME -- FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE HOUSE -- BUT THAT WAS AN IMPOSSIBILITY!

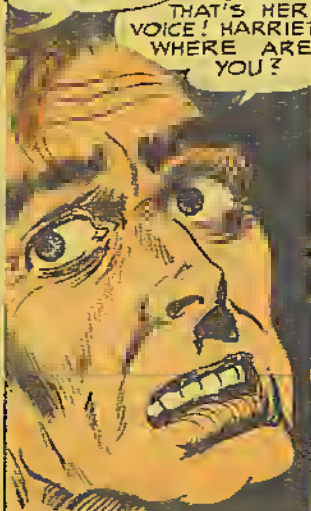
THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HARRIET CALLING ME! SHE'S IN CHICAGO -- VISITING HER FOLKS!

WHO'S UP THERE? WHO'S IN THIS HOUSE?



MARVIN! DON'T COME AFTER ME! DON'T --

IT IS HARRIET! THAT'S HER VOICE! HARRIET! WHERE ARE YOU?



MARVIN MILES' WIFE WAS NOT IN THAT SILENT HOUSE. YET, HE HEARD HER CLEARLY! AND HE REMEMBERED TALES OF WARNINGS FROM THE DEAD! HE WAS UNEASY, WORRIED -- THEN FRIGHTENED!

OPERATOR! I WANT TO TALK TO CHICAGO!





# BLACK MAGIC

A THOUSAND HORRIBLE VISIONS DANCED THROUGH MARVIN MILES' BRAIN AS HE PLACED HIS CALL! HE WAITED TENSELY... AND THEN, RELIEF FLOODED THROUGH HIM...

HARRIET! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? TELL ME...

MARVIN, OF COURSE I'M ALL RIGHT! WHAT'S WRONG? YOU SOUND SO WORRIED!



IT SEEMS SILLY NOW! BUT I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU... HERE! IT WAS JUST MY IMAGINATION! FORGET IT!



FORGET IT? IMAGINATION? YOU AREN'T MAKING SENSE! TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT!

SHEEPLISHLY, MARVIN MILES EXPLAINED AND HIS WIFE JUST LAUGHED. THEY BOTH LAUGHED! YET, AFTERWARD... ALONE WITH THE CREEPING SHADOWS, MARVIN MILES FELT ODDLY ILL AT EASE!

BRRR! I NEVER KNEW MY OWN HOME COULD LOOK SO EERIE! VOICES! NEXT I'LL BE SEEING GOBLINS! I'LL GET BACK TO WORK AND TAKE MY MIND OFF IT ALL!



THERE WERE TIMES DURING THE NEXT YEAR WHEN MILES' WIFE TEASED HIM ABOUT HIS "NIGHT-MARE!" BUT THE INCIDENT WAS JUST A CURIOUS MEMORY! THEN BY SUMMER IT WAS ALL BUT FORGOTTEN!

THERE! THAT'S THE LAST ONE! LET'S GET STARTED!

IT'S ABOUT TIME! WOMEN AND THEIR LUGGAGE! MADAME, THE CHARIOT AWAITS... TIMES FLEES BY! CLIMB IN! THIS IS ONE VACATION I'M ANXIOUS TO GET STARTED ON!



THEN, TOO, THERE WAS NOTHING DIFFERENT ABOUT MARVIN MILES! THEY WENT ON A TOUR LIKE A MILLION OTHER AMERICANS! THEY VISITED MONUMENTS, PARKS... AND QUANT OLD FASHIONED COVERED BRIDGES!

STOP FUSSING WITH THE CAR! WE DROVE FORTY MILES OUT OF OUR WAY TO SEE THIS BRIDGE!

I WON'T BE A MINUTE, DEAR! YOU GO AHEAD! THE SPARK PLUG IS LOOSE! GOOD THING I'M A BIT OF A MECHANIC!



MECHANIC! THAT'S A LAUGH! BUT, IF YOU MUST FUSS, I MAY AS WELL TAKE SOME PICTURES WHILE YOU'RE WORKING!



HELP!

HARRIET! LOOK OUT!





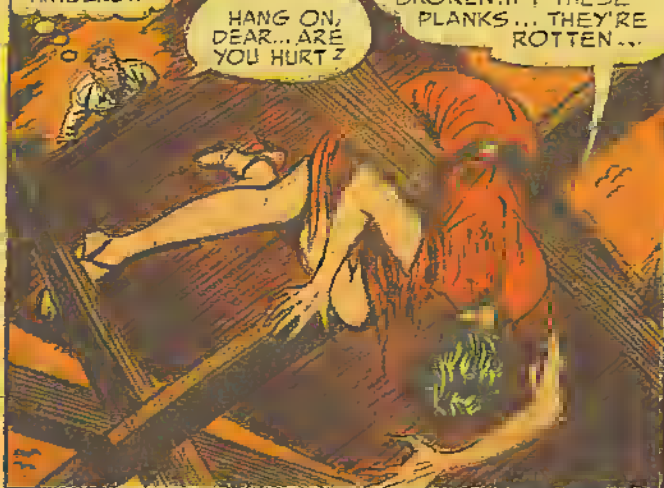
# BLACK MAGIC

GOOD GRAVY! IT'S LUCKY SHE'S CAUGHT ON THOSE TIMBERS...

HANG ON, DEAR... ARE YOU HURT?

I... I CAN'T MOVE MY LEG... I THINK IT... IT'S BROKEN... T-THOSE PLANKS... THEY'RE ROTTEN...

THEY MAY GIVE WAY ANY SECOND! DON'T COME AFTER ME, MARVIN! DON'T COME AFTER ME...



MARVIN MILES HAD STARTED TO CLIMB TO HIS WIFE'S RESCUE! HE WAS ABOUT TO SET HIS FEET ON A CROSS TIMBER TO RELEASE HIS HOLD ON THE PLANKS ABOVE! BUT THOSE WORDS STRUCK A CHORD IN HIS MIND!

"DON'T COME AFTER ME!" THOSE WERE THE WORDS I HEARD THAT TIME IN THE HOUSE! AND I WAS WORKING WITH ROTTEN WOOD AT THE TIME... ROTTEN, LIKE THIS AGED TIMBER...



GOT TO BE CAREFUL! TEST EVERY FOOT HOLD... GREAT SCOTT! THAT PLANK... CRUMBLED UNDER MY FIRST STEP...



IF MARVIN MILES HAD SET FOOT ON THAT TIMBER, HE'D HAVE DIED BUT, HE DID NOT! WHEN THE SPLINTERED BULK HAD FALLEN CLEAR HE CLIMBED DOWNWARD SLOWLY, WITH PAINFUL CAUTION...

MARVIN! GO BACK! YOU'LL NEVER GET ME TO THE TOP! YOU'LL BE KILLED!

RATHER THAT... THEN LET YOU DIE! HOLD ON, HONEY...



AFTERWARD IT SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE! BUT MILES DID IT! SOMEHOW, HE BROUGHT HIS WIFE TO THE TOP!

OH, MARVIN... I... I WAS SO TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED!

T-THAT WARNING VOICE... A YEAR AGO! IT SAVED OUR LIVES TODAY!



THEY SAY THAT LOVE CAN SPAN BOTH SPACE AND TIME! PERHAPS, IT IS SOMETHING MORE MATERIAL THAN A POETIC PHRASE! TO ME IT'S A LIVING FORCE WHICH AFFECTS OUR VERY LIVES!



THE END

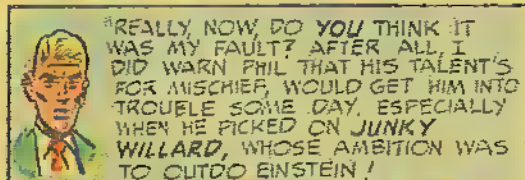
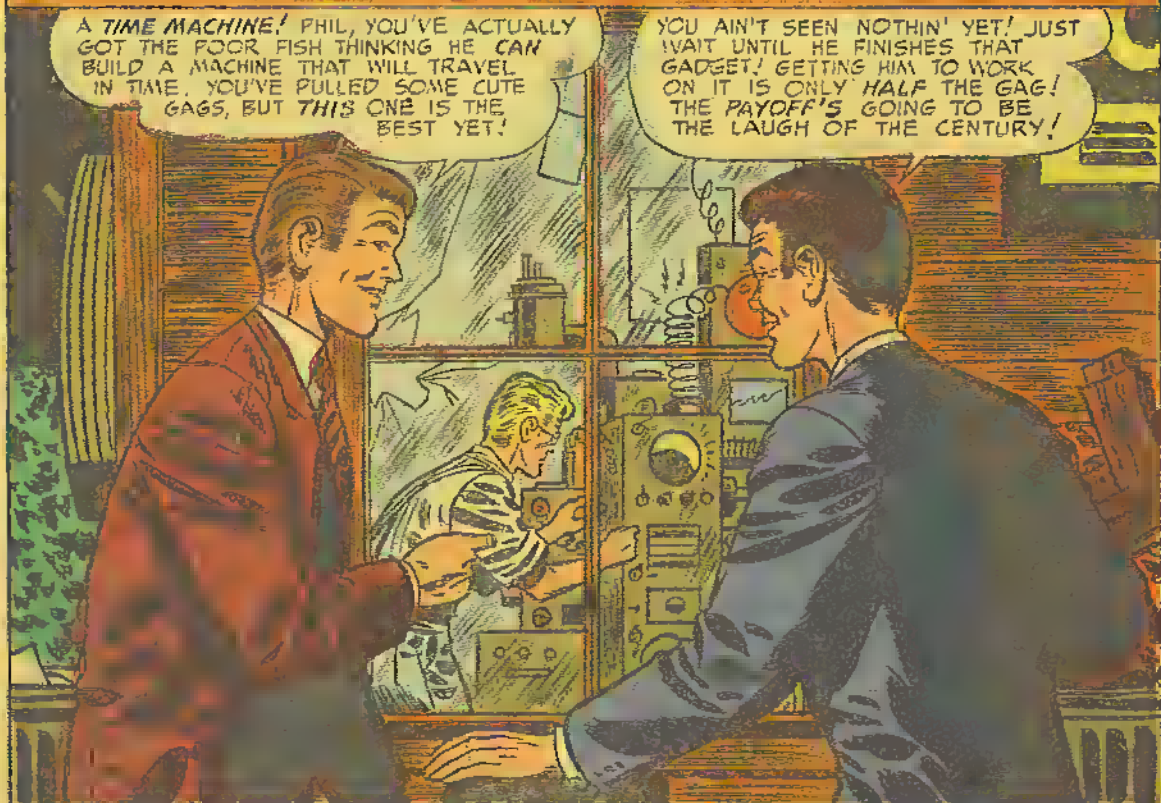
MAYBE! PHILOSOPHERS SAY THAT LOVE IS THE MOST POTENT FORCE ON EARTH! WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION? MARVIN MILES ONLY KNOWS THAT HE'D LISTENED TO A VOICE FROM THE FUTURE!



THIS CHARACTER'S A HOWL! HE STARTED TO TELL US HOW HE GOT THE CAMPUS INVENTOR INTERESTED IN BUILDING A TIME MACHINE -- BUT HE LEFT SUDDENLY, BEFORE HE COULD GIVE OUT WITH THE PUNCH LINE!

Wonder where he is! -- Has anybody seen --

## THE PRACTICAL JOKER



"JUNKY" WAS A SCIENCE BUG -- ALWAYS ON THE PROWL FOR SPARE RADIO TUBES AND THINGS WHICH HE ASSEMBLED INTO COMPLICATED GADGETS THAT STUMPED EVEN THE PROFESSOR... WHY NOBODY WOULD TOUCH 'JUNKY' FOR FEAR OF GETTING ELECTROCUTED BY AN OLD 'HOT WIRE!

HA HA HA! THAT WAS A PERFECT, THREE POINT LANDING ON YOUR SEAT OF LEARNING, JUNKY --

ONE CAN OVERLOOK YOUR BOORISH SENSE OF HUMOR, PHIL! BUT YOUR 'CLICHES ARE ALMOST INTOLERABLE!





# BLACK MAGIC

NOW, THE ELECTRONICS GENIUS IS ANGRY! THAT'S BAD! HE MIGHT BLOW OUT AN I.Q.! HERE! LET ME JUST OFF THE BOOKS YOU SPILLED...

WELL, "THE PHYSICS AND THEORY OF TIME TRAVEL," THE MECHANICS OF TIME MACHINES... WITH DIAGRAMS. YET! SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WORKING ON!

PRECISELY! I FIND THE SUBJECT FASCINATING... AND QUITE PRACTICAL, DESPITE YOUR OBVIOUS BELIEF TO THE CONTRARY. MY BOOKS, PLEASE!

JUNKY, OLD BOY! YOU'VE GOT ME ALL WRONG! I, TOO, THINK IT'S PRACTICAL! HMM... A SCHEMATIC DRAWING OF A TIME MACHINE, ISN'T IT? LOOKS LIKE IT WOULD WORK TOO!

IT WOULD! THERE ARE STILL SOME KINKS TO BE IRONED OUT, BUT I CAN BUILD SUCH A MACHINE, I ASSURE YOU!



A TIME MACHINE? YOU MEAN A GADGET THAT WOULD TAKE A MAN BACKWARD OR FORWARD IN TIME? YOU'RE CRAZY!

SHUT UP, GEORGE! HEY, LISTEN, JUNKY! I BELIEVE YOU CAN BUILD THIS THING! HONEST! IN FACT, I'VE GOT SOME DOUGH TO INVEST... AND I KNOW OF AN ABANDONED GARAGE, OUTSIDE OF TOWN YOU CAN USE AS A WORK SHOP!

WELL! WHAT CAN A MAN SAY WHEN HE'S FOUND THE FAITH AND FINANCIAL AID OF A PATRON! IT'S A DEAL!

I WATCHED PHIL'S CHEEKS PUFF OUT IN THE PRELIMINARY STAGES OF A HORSELAUGH AS JUNKY LEFT THE SCENE! I KNEW THERE WAS ANOTHER PRANK DEVELOPING! I DIDN'T LIKE IT!

DON'T DO IT, PHIL! WHATEVER, YOU'RE UP TO... FORGET IT! JUNKY'S SERIOUS ABOUT THIS! HE'LL END UP MAKING THE WHOLE TOWN RADIOACTIVE OR SOMETHING...

AW, DON'T BE A WET BLANKET, GEORGIE BOY! MAYBE THE GADGET WILL WORK... AND WE CAN TOSS OUR HISTORY TEACHER INTO IT FOR LAUGHS!



FROM IT'S INSPIRED BEGINNINGS, JUNKY'S TIME MACHINE WAS A SOURCE OF HYSTERICIS TO PHIL... EVEN AS HE VISITED THE WORK-SHOP AND WATCHED THE DEVELOPMENTS WITH NARY A FLICKER OF AMUSEMENT!

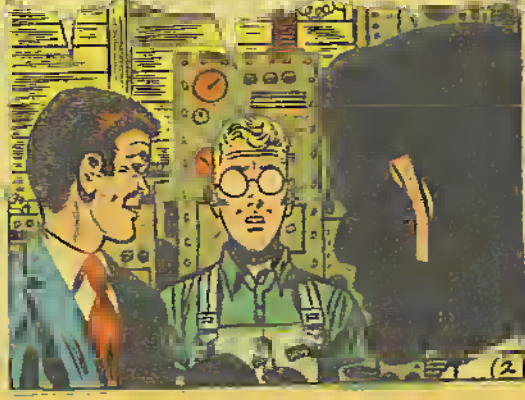
AMAZING! JUNKY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING... BUT IT SURE LOOKS LIKE PROGRESS...

YES, THE MACHINE IS FORMING ACCORDING TO PLAN! BUT... YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP! I THOUGHT YOU AND GEORGE WERE GOING TO WORK WITH ME TONIGHT!

WE WERE, BUT SOMETHING CAME UP! YOU DON'T MIND, DO YOU, OLD MAN?

NO... NO, I SUPPOSE NOT! THERE IS SOME HEAVY WORK TO DO, BUT I GUESS I'LL MANAGE!

SURE YOU CAN, JUNKY! WHY WE'D ONLY FOUL UP THINGS FOR YOU... RUIN YOUR LIFE'S WORK!





# BLACK MAGIC

GET A LOAD OF THAT JUNK HE'S BUYING...WITH MY DOUGH! WELL...I'LL TAKE IT OUT OF HIM IN LAUGHS! I HOPE HE PUTS WHEELS ON IT! I'LL DUMP HIM INSIDE IT WITH RADIO TUBES IN HIS EARS...AND RIDE HIM AROUND THE CAMPUS!



I BEGAN TO WONDER ABOUT PHIL'S SENSE OF HUMOR AT THAT MOMENT! IN FACT, BEING IN HIS PRESENCE MADE ME FEEL A TRIFLE *INSECURE!* IN FACT, WHEN THE BIG DAY CAME... I WAS DOWN-  
RIGHT DISTURBED!

FINISHED, EH? SO THIS IS IT! WELL, JUNKY, WE CAN'T LET YOU AND YOUR GREAT ACHIEVEMENT JUST PASS INTO HISTORY UNNOTICED! NO, SIR! SO I'LL TAKE OVER FROM HERE, AND...

SO, IT'S

JUST A MOMENT, PHIL! AREN'T YOU INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT IF THIS MACHINE WILL *WORK* OR NOT? I THOUGHT OF TESTING IT FIRST...



LATER! LATER, JUNKY! WE'VE GOT TO PROMOTE THIS THING... AROUSE INTEREST! MAKE 'EM STAND UP AND HOW... I MEAN, CHEER! WITH YOU AS THE CENTER OF ATTRACTION!

I... I *DON'T* SEE WHY ALL THAT CAN'T WAIT UNTIL A TEST IS MADE! I'LL SEND AN OBJECT INTO TIME... SOME SMALL INANIMATE OBJECT!

ALL RIGHT, YOU WANT TO *PLAY!* OKAY... TELL YOU WHAT! LET'S ALL PLAY! WE'LL HAVE SCADS OF FUN! I'LL GO FIRST... AND TAKE NOTES OF WHAT I SEE! WHEN I GET BACK... YOU BOYS

GO!



PHIL WAS PLAYING GAMES, ALL RIGHT, BUT, SOMETHING IN JUNKY'S SOBER ATTITUDE MADE MY SPINE CRAWL! I TRIED TO PUT A STOP TO THIS THING... BUT, PHIL WAS HAVING TOO GOOD A TIME, TO LISTEN!

AS YOU SAY! I'LL SET THE CONTROLS FOR A DATE, *FIVE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE PAST!* YOU HAVE MY RESPECT AND ADMIRATION, PHIL! GOOD LUCK!

YEAH... WAIT! I'LL *EINSTEIN* HEARS ABOUT THIS, EH, KID?



HATCH SECURE  
TEMPORAL DRIVE...  
GAINING CURRENT...  
HERE WE GO...

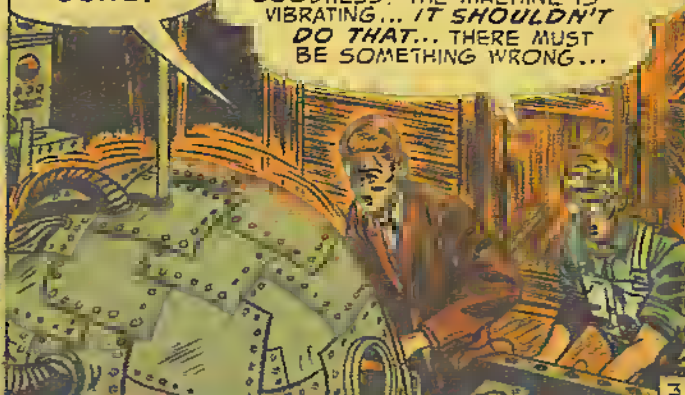
PHIL... *LISTEN!*  
I... I *DON'T*  
LIKE THIS!  
I... I...



SUDDENLY, THE SHACK WAS FILLED WITH A *SHRILL* WHINE THAT ROSE TO A SCREAM AND THEN FADED! I GASPED IN HORROR WHEN I PEERED INTO THE MACHINES INTERIOR! *PHIL HAD FADED TOO!*

HE... HE'S GONE!  
JUNKY! PHIL'S  
*GONE!*

OF COURSE! AT THIS MOMENT HE'S SOMEWHERE *FIVE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE PAST!* MY GOODNESS! THE MACHINE IS VIBRATING... IT *SHOULDN'T* DO THAT... THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WRONG...





# BLACK MAGIC

GOOD GRAVY! WHAT ABOUT PHIL? DO SOMETHING! ANYTHING!

I'VE GOT IT! THE THERMODYNES ARE REACTING ON THE PROTONIC EJECTION COILS! LOOK OUT!



WHATEVER WAS DOING THE REACTING CAME FLYING AT US FROM EVERY DIRECTION! THE CLEARING SMOKE REVEALED AN AWFUL MESS!

IT'S SHATTERED BEYOND REPAIR! ALL MY WORK GONE FOR NOTHING!

BUT... BUT WHERE'S PHIL GONE TO, YOU CRAZY FOOL! H-HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET HIM BACK?



I... DON'T SEE HOW THAT'S POSSIBLE AT PRESENT! PHIL WAS DULY AWARE OF THE RISK WHEN HE VOLUNTEERED!

VOLUNTEERED? LOOK, JUNKY! DON'T YOU GET IT YET? HE DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD WORK! IT WAS ALL A GAG! A PRACTICAL JOKE! OH, MY ACHING BACK! WHAT A JOKE THIS TURNED OUT TO BE!



I WAS IN A FIT OF PANIC! WHAT WERE WE TO DO? MY MIND WAS A WHIRLING CAGE RUN BY A PACK OF FRENZIED MICE! I COLLARED JUNKY...

BUT THERE'S STILL A CHANCE! YOU CAN BUILD ANOTHER MACHINE! THAT'S IT! COME ON! YOU'VE GOT TO GET TO WORK RIGHT AWAY!

THAT'S THE TRAGEDY... I DON'T HAVE MY PLANS! AND, I COULD NEVER DUPLICATE THEM FROM MEMORY! NOT EVEN IF I SPENT A LIFETIME TRYING!



NO PLANS. YOU'RE INSANE! TH- THEY WERE RIGHT HERE ON THE TABLE! I SAW THEM! NOT FIVE MINUTES AGO!

I KNOW! THEY WERE ON THE TABLE! BUT... THAT PAPER PHIL TOOK WITH HIM, TO MAKE NOTES ON... THOSE WERE MY DRAWINGS! THE ONLY ONE WHO... WHO CAN DUPLICATE MY MACHINE IS PHIL!



AND HE WON'T BE ABLE TO! BECAUSE HE HASN'T THE BRAINS! WHAT'S MORE... HE HASN'T THE MATERIALS! THAT KIND OF EQUIPMENT WAS UN-DREAMED OF WHERE HE IS NOW! FIVE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE PAST!



I BEGAN TO LAUGH THEN! I LAUGHED HYSTERICALLY... UNTIL THE TEARS CAME FROM MY EYES! AND I WAS STILL LAUGHING WHEN THEY PUT JUNKY AND ME INTO A PADDED CELL AFTER THE INVESTIGATION IT WAS THE FUNNIEST GAG PHIL EVER PULLED... THIS GAG ON HIM -

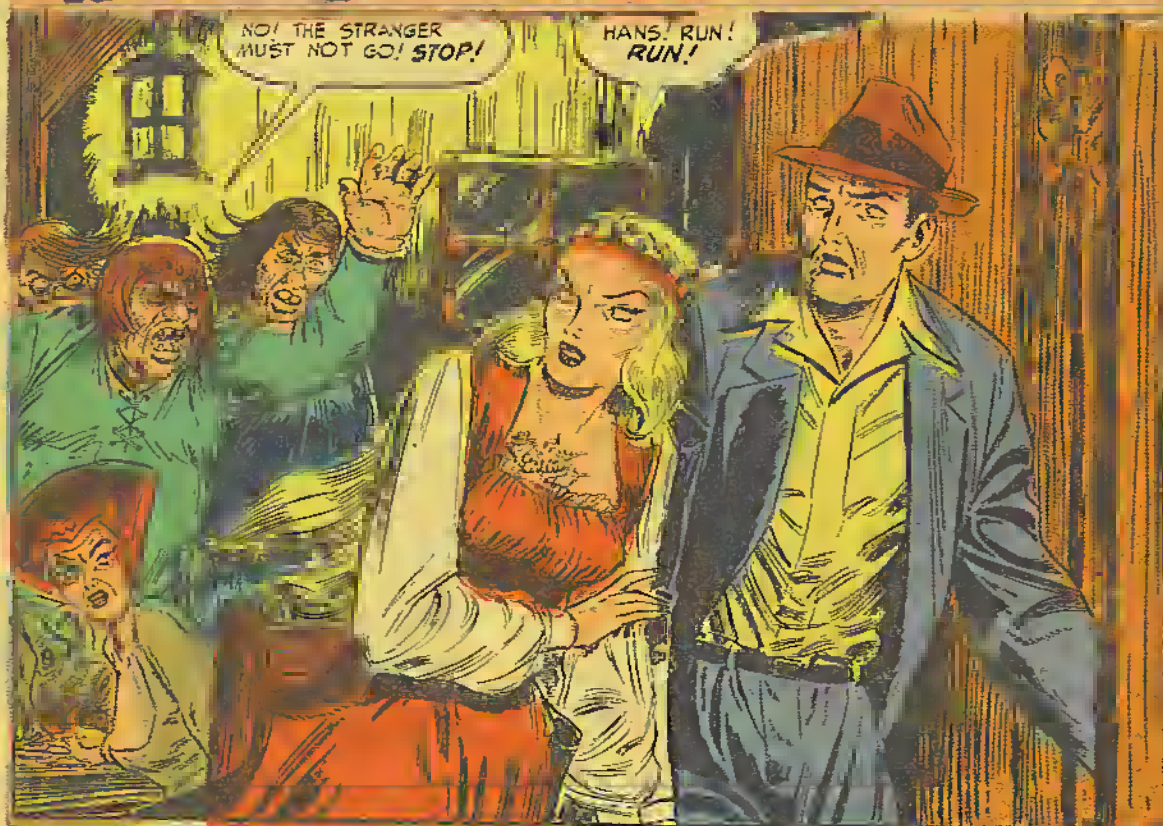
THE END



# BLACK MAGIC

They say that John Cooper was mad, that his story was the meaningless raving of a sick mind. But we think differently! We think he really did stumble into the--

## VALLEY of PHANTOMS!



NO! THE STRANGER  
MUST NOT GO! STOP!

HANS! RUN!  
RUN!

MIDNIGHT, SEPTEMBER 13, 1937. THAT WAS WHEN IT BEGAN. JOHN COOPER, AN AMERICAN STUDENT ON A WALKING TOUR OF THE BLACK FOREST IN GERMANY, STIRRED RESTLESSLY IN HIS SLEEP-- THEN--

A ROOSTER! I COULD HAVE SWORN I HEARD A ROOSTER CROWING! BUT, IT'S MIDNIGHT! I MUST HAVE DREAMED IT! AND NO WONDER! THIS PLACE IS LIKE SOME BROODING ANCIENT TOMB.

ALL ABOUT JOHN COOPER, THE FOREST SHOULD HAVE BEEN ALIVE WITH THE THOUSAND AND ONE SOUNDS OF NIGHT-- BUT, THE DARKNESS WAS A SILENT SHROUD.

BR-R! JOHNNY, MY BOY, YOUR IMAGINATION IS GETTING YOU! YOU'D BETTER GET SOME SLEEP BEFORE YOU START SEEING LITTLE MEN PEEKING OUT AT YOU FROM BEHIND TOADSTOOLS!





# BLACK MAGIC

COOPER SLEPT FITFULLY THAT NIGHT! AND IN THE MORNING NO LEAVES STIRRED, NO BIRDS CHIRPED! HE FELT STRANGELY ILL AT EASE, AS HE WENT HIS WAY! THEN HE SAW IT!

A VILLAGE! I MUST HAVE LOST MY WAY! MY MAP DOESN'T SHOW ANY VILLAGE HEREABOUTS! WHAT A BREAK! NOW I CAN GET A DECENT BREAKFAST!



THE WAY COOPER TOLD THE STORY LATER, THE VILLAGE SAT IN A VALLEY! SO THAT AS HE WALKED DOWN INTO THE MISTS THAT COVERED IT, THE SUN VANISHED! HE REMEMBERS THAT... AND OTHER IMPRESSIONS!

THIS TOWN IS INCREDIBLE! IT MUST BE HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD... AND THE WAY THE PEOPLE ARE DRESSED... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!



MISS, I WONDER IF YOU COULD TELL ME WHERE I CAN GET A MEAL?

YOU... YOU ARE AN **OUTSIDER!**



WHY, YES, I AM! BUT IS THAT SO ODD? YOU MUST GET LOTS OF TOURISTS HERE! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT! IT'S AS IF THE TOWN **HASN'T** CHANGED IN CENTURIES!

HASPER HAUSEN NEVER CHANGES!



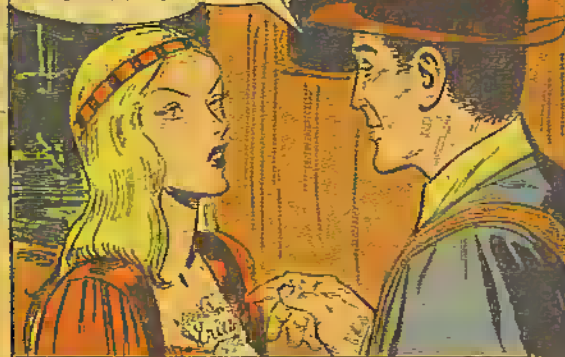
NO, WAIT! LOOK, I'M A LITTLE MIXED UP! I THINK I'M LOST AND EVERYBODY SEEMS TO BE IN SUCH A HURRY! CAN'T YOU TALK FOR A MINUTE?

THERE IS SO LITTLE TIME... AND SO MUCH TO DO! I MUST GO, MEIN HERR!

WHY ALL THE RUSH?



THE NAME IS JOHN! I GUESS YOU'D CALL ME HANS, AND YOU'RE ERICA! THAT'S PRETTY EMBROIDERY, ERICA... AND YOU'RE A PRETTY GIRL! OR WOULD BE IF YOU DIDN'T LOOK SO SOLEMN! COME ON, **SMILE** FOR JOHNNY!



JOHN COOPER WAS A NORMAL, HEALTHY MALE... AND THE GIRL WAS PRETTY! BUT HE LOOKED INTO HER EYES... AND HIS SMILE DIED!

I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE FRESH! FORGET IT! I'LL FIND THE INN MYSELF! I LIKE THIS TOWN! I THINK I'LL STAY A WHILE!

YOU WILL... STAY IN HASPER HAUSEN? THEN COME HOME WITH ME! WE HAVE AN INN, BUT IT WILL BE CROWDED! IF YOU ARE HUNGRY, I WILL FEED YOU!





# BLACK MAGIC

THE SLIM GIRL LED THE WAY, HER HAND WARM IN JOHN COOPER'S GRASP... AND THE HURRYING PEOPLE STARED!

WHEW! THE WAY EVERYBODY LOOKS AT ME, MAYBE I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOU GETTING A LOT OF TOURISTS HERE! T-THEY ALMOST SEEM TO HATE ME!

ERICA! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? HURRY GIRL! HURRY! THE CELEBRATION HAS ALREADY BEGUN!

YOU GETTING A LOT OF TOURISTS HERE! T-THEY ALMOST SEEM TO HATE ME!

CELEBRATION? SO THAT'S WHY EVERYBODY IS IN COSTUME! IT'S SOME SORT OF FESTIVAL!

HE IS NOT ONE OF US!

YES, FATHER, THIS IS HANS!

HE IS HUNGRY! GO FATHER! WE WILL COME TO THE SQUARE AS SOON AS HE HAS EATEN!

A STRANGER IN HASPER HAUSEN! AFTER ... SO LONG! YES, BRING HIM, GIRL! YOU ARE WELCOME, MEIN HERR! VERY WELCOME!

THE MAN SMILED, BUT ONLY WITH HIS LIPS! JOHN COOPER ATE! BUT THE GIRL WAS RESTLESS! WHEN HE WAS DONE, SHE LED THE WAY SWIFTLY TO A SQUARE WHERE COUPLES DANCED GRO-TESTEQUELY!

FESTIVAL! THIS LOOKS MORE LIKE A WAKE! I ALWAYS THOUGHT DANCING WAS SOMETHING TO BE ENJOYED! DO THEY ALWAYS DANCE THIS WAY?

YOU DO NOT NEED TO UNDERSTAND! NOT YET! DANCE WITH ME!

IT WAS LIKE A DREAM! NO MAN OR WOMAN SMILED! NO VOICES ROSE ON THE STILL AIR...

THAT'S ENOUGH! T-THIS IS LIKE DANCING IN A GRAVE-YARD! LET'S SIT THIS ONE OUT!

NO! WE MUST NOT LEAVE! THE DANCING WILL END SOON! SO... SOON!

THEN LET IT END! ERICA, YOU DON'T BELONG WITH THESE ... DANCING CORPSES! I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT ALL MEANS! BUT, YOU'RE PRETTY! YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY, SMILING! SOMEHOW, I FEEL SORRY

YOU ARE SORRY... FOR ME? DOES MY HAPPINESS MATTER TO YOU, THEN?



# BLACK MAGIC

THOSE SAD EYES PROBED INTO COOPER'S HEART AND JUST FOR A MOMENT HE THOUGHT HE SAW SOMETHING IN THEM! PITY! FOR HIM! BUT THAT COULD NOT BE!

JOHN COOPER'S MAP SHOWED NO RIVER WITHIN A HUNDRED MILES... BUT THE RIVER WAS THERE! IT FLOWED LIKE MOLTEN LEAD AND HERE AND THERE FIGURES STRAINED TOGETHER! BUT COLDLY, LIKE DEAD THINGS!

YES, ERICA, SUDDENLY... IT MATTERS VERY MUCH!

THEN, COME! WE SHALL WALK BY THE RIVER! IT IS WHERE LOVERS WALK! WE SHALL WALK THERE TOGETHER! COME!

ERICA, SOMETHING IS WRONG! EVEN WITH THESE PEOPLE! THEY'RE JUST GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS, AS IF IT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO THEM...

I KNOW! THAT IS WHY I ASKED YOU TO WALK HERE WITH ME! PERHAPS IF YOU KISSED ME, I WOULD FEEL THE WARMTH AGAIN! HANS, KISS ME! I BEG OF YOU!

OH THAT WAS GOOD! GOOD! YOU ARE NOT LIKE THEM! LIKE US! YOUR BLOOD FLOWS WARM AND YOU HAVE TIME! TIME!

ERICA! I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU! I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS! BUT JUST NOW, WHEN I KISSED YOU I THINK I FELT IN LOVE WITH YOU! I'VE ONLY KNOWN YOU FOR A FEW HOURS! BUT, I LOVE YOU!

AND I LOVE YOU! I'VE WAITED SO LONG FOR LOVE! I DID NOT THINK IT WOULD EVER COME AGAIN! BUT IT HAS! HOLD ME! HANS, HOLD ME CLOSE! WARM ME WITH YOUR KISS!

THOSE HOURS WERE SWEET FOR JOHN COOPER. HE WALKED WITH HIS LOVE BY A RIVER OF LEAD AND IT WAS A SWEET DREAM! BUT DREAMS MUST END!

BONG! BONG!

EIGHT-NINE-NINE! THE FEAST! IT'S ABOUT TO BEGIN! THREE HOURS! THREE MORE HOURS!

FEAST? WHAT FEAST? ERICA, EVERY HOUR, WHEN YOU HEARD THOSE BELLS, YOU'VE ACTED AS THOUGH YOU WERE SCARED! JUST WHAT IS HASPER HAUSEN CELEBRATING, ANYWAY?

IT IS... A CUSTOM! THE FEAST COMES AT THE END OF OUR FESTIVAL! BUT WE WILL NOT GO! FOR THE FIRST TIME... I WILL STAY AWAY! WITH YOU! WE WILL NOT GO BACK!

BUT WHY? ERICA, WE'RE IN LOVE! I WANT TO TELL YOUR FATHER! I CAN STAY IN HASPER HAUSEN AND WE CAN ARRANGE TO BE MARRIED!

NO! THAT IS THE ONE THING YOU MUST NOT DO! YOU MUST GO SOON!

GO? WITHOUT YOU? BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! YOU SAID YOU LOVED ME, ERICA, WHAT IS ALL THIS? I'VE GOT TO KNOW!





# BLACK MAGIC

DO NOT ASK ME!  
THINK WHAT YOU  
LIKE! BUT DO NOT  
ASK ME! THERE  
ARE NO ANSWER  
TO YOUR QUESTIONS!  
NONE YOU WOULD  
UNDERSTAND!

YOU MEAN NONE  
YOU'LL **GIVE** ME!  
ALL RIGHT! THEN  
I'LL GET THE  
ANSWERS MY-  
SELF! IN THE  
VILLAGE! WE'RE  
GOING BACK TO  
SEE YOUR

FATHER!

JOHN  
COOPER  
WOULD  
LISTEN  
TO NO  
ARGUMENT!  
HE STRODE  
AWAY...  
AND THE  
GIRL  
FOLLOWED  
TEARFULLY!  
BUT, IT  
WOULD  
HAVE BEEN  
BETTER  
FOR JOHN  
COOPER

HAD  
**NEVER**  
RETURNED  
TO HASPER  
HAUSEN!

SO! THE STRANGER  
**REMAINS** IN  
HASPER  
HAUSEN!

FOR A LITTLE WHILE,  
AT LEAST! MEIN HERR,  
I HAVE TO TALK TO  
YOU! **ALONE!**



TONIGHT IS A NIGHT  
FOR PLEASURE! WE  
DRINK! THERE WILL  
BE TIME FOR  
TALKING  
**LATER!**

NO! HE  
IS NOT  
STAYING!  
HE LEAVES!  
SOON! HANS,  
TELL THEM! TELL

**THEN**  
**STAY**  
YOU  
SHALL!  
COME!  
DRINK!

AYE! DRINK! **TO-**  
**MORROW** WE  
SHALL TALK! WE  
SHALL HAVE MANY  
TOMORROWS!

THEY CROWDED ABOUT, TOUCHING  
HIM... AND THEY HATED HIM! JOHN  
COOPER COULD FEEL IT! THEY  
HATED HIM, YET THEY FEASTED HIM,  
PAMPERED HIM... THAT IS... UNTIL  
THE BELL SOUNDED...

BUT I DON'T  
HAVE TO LEAVE!  
I **WANT** TO  
STAY!

THAT  
YOU  
MUST  
LEAVE  
SOON!



NO!

**BONG!**  
**BONG!**

SIX...  
SEVEN...

ERICA! WHY  
HAS EVERYONE  
GOTTEN SO  
QUIET? WHY ARE  
THE BELLS SO  
IMPORTANT?



EIGHT...  
NINE...  
TEN...  
ELEVEN!

IT IS ELEVEN O'CLOCK, HANS, COME WITH  
ME! WE MUST SLIP OUT! NOW, WHILE THEY  
LISTEN TO THE BELLS!  
FOR THE SAKE OF...  
YOUR **SOUL**...  
COME WITH  
ME!

WHY... YOU'RE  
**SERIOUS!** ALL  
RIGHT, ERICA!  
LET'S GO!

**NO!** THE STRANGER  
MUST NOT GO! STOP!

HANS! RUN! **RUN!**





# BLACK MAGIC

THE HATE WAS UNMASKED, THEN! BEHIND JOHN COOPER THEY CAME WITH FINGERS CLAWING AND TEETH BARED! JOHN RAN, KNOWING THAT SOMETHING EVIL FOLLOWED! UNTIL HE COULD RUN NO MORE!

I THINK... WE'VE LOST THEM! ERICA, WHAT HAVE I DONE? WHY DO THEY HATE ME SO?

ARE YOU SO BLIND? THEY HATE YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT AS THEY ARE! AS I AM! YOU WALK THE EARTH! YOU SEE THE SUN EACH DAY! WHY WOULD THEY NOT HATE YOU?



THAT IS ALL THAT IS LEFT TO US! HATE! THAT IS WHY THEY WANTED YOU TO STAY IN HASPER HAUSEN! SO THAT YOU WOULD BECOME AS THEY ARE! THAT IS WHY I WANTED YOU TO STAY IN HASPER HAUSEN AT FIRST!

Y-YOU HATED ME, TOO! ERICA!



**BONG! BONG!** YES, I HATED YOU... AND YOU SMILED! YOU SMILED AND GAVE ME YOUR LOVE! YOU MADE ME FEEL... LIFE AGAIN! BECAUSE OF THAT, I COULD NOT LET YOU STAY IN HASPER HAUSEN!



**BONG! BONG!** ERICA! YOU'RE CRYING! HERE! LET ME DRY YOUR EYES!

NO! THERE IS NO TIME! IT IS ALMOST MID-NIGHT! I **MUST** GO BACK!



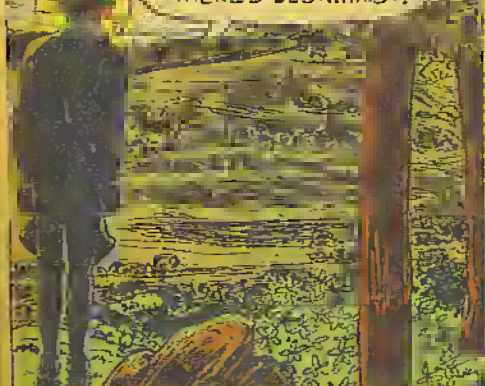
GOOD-BYE! GOOD-BYE, MY LOVE!

ERICA, WAIT! ERICA! I CAN HARDLY SEE YOU! WAIT!



BUT ONLY THE SILENCE ANSWERED! JOHN COOPER RAN BACK THE WAY HE HAD COME! DESPITE THE HATE, DESPITE THE DANGER, HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND!

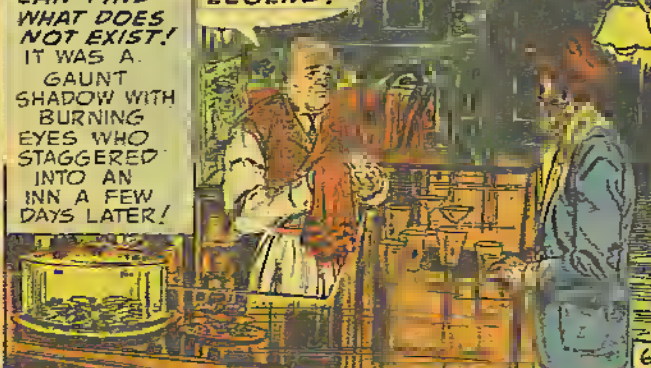
NOTHING! HASPER HAUSEN... IS GONE! THERE'S JUST... MIST!



OH, HE SEARCHED, OF COURSE! HE WENT WITHOUT FOOD, WITHOUT SLEEP! **BUT NO MAN CAN FIND WHAT DOES NOT EXIST!** IT WAS A GAUNT SHADOW WITH BURNING EYES WHO STAGGERED INTO AN INN A FEW DAYS LATER!

HASPER HAUSEN? YOU WISH TO GO TO HASPER HAUSEN? MEIN HERR! YOU MUST BE ILL! TO DO THAT YOU WOULD HAVE TO KNOW A WAY BACK INTO THE PAST! YOU DO NOT KNOW THE LEGEND?

THE LEGEND!





# BLACK MAGIC

JA! IT IS WELL KNOWN HEREABOUTS! HASPER HAUSEN WAS A VILLAGE OF EVIL! ITS PEOPLE TURNED TO THE BLACK ARTS! CENTURIES AGO! THAT'S WHY THEY WERE ACCURSED! BUT IT IS JUST A TALE!

ERICA...  
ACCURSED?  
NO...

TELL ME  
MORE!  
TELL  
ME!

MEIN HERR! Y-YOU HURT MY WRIST! I WILL TELL YOU! HASPER HAUSEN'S PEOPLE OBTAINED THEIR HEARTS DESIRE! ETERNAL LIFE! TO FIND HASPER HAUSEN IS TO BECOME ONE OF THEM! FOREVER!

THEN THEY STILL LIVE! BUT YOU THEY MUST EXIST! DO NOT HASPER HAUSEN UNDERSTAND! MUST BE THE VILLAGE SOMEWHERE! I WAS CURSED FOR TELL ME ITS SINS! THE PEOPLE WHERE! LIVE ETERNALLY... FOR ONE DAY IN EACH HUNDRED YEARS!

FROM MIDNIGHT TO MIDNIGHT! BUT IT IS ONLY A LEGEND!

NO! IT IS NOT... A LEGEND! NOW, I CAN SEE! ONE DAY... TO LIVE, TO LOVE! ONE DAY IN EVERY CENTURY! THAT WAS WHY THEY FOUND NO JOY IN THEIR... FESTIVAL!

THAT IS WHAT ERICA SAVED ME FROM! BUT, I WOULD HAVE STAYED! EVEN THEN I WOULD HAVE STAYED! FOR HER! ERICA...

JOHN COOPER TOLD HIS STORY AFTER-WARD, IN THE HOSPITAL TO WHICH HE WAS TAKEN... AND WAS PITIED AS A MAD-MAN! THEN HE DIED! BUT ONE THING HAS NEVER BEEN EXPLAINED!

A SAD DUTY, NURSE! IT ISN'T PLEASANT TO HAVE TO GATHER TOGETHER A MAN'S POSSESSIONS AND SEND THEM TO HIS PARENTS IN PLACE OF THEIR SON! BUT TELL ME, WHAT DID YOU THINK OF COOPER'S STORY?

THINK OF IT? WHY, THE MAN WAS OUT OF HIS MIND! WHAT ELSE, DOCTOR?

OF COURSE... AND YET, THIS HANDKERCHIEF WE FOUND IN HIS POCKET! ITS OLD! VERY OLD! THIS TYPE OF HAND WOVEN LINEN HASN'T BEEN MADE FOR CENTURIES! I WONDER WHERE HE REALLY GOT IT?

THE END



**THIS WAS THE  
STORY YOU READ  
IN THE PAPERS!**



**TEEN AGE SWEET-  
HEARTS HELD  
AFTER WILD  
ESCAPADE**

Oct. 10. The pathetic story of two troubled teen-agers, desperate over their parents' objection to their romance, was unfolded today in juvenile court.

**BUT**  
was it the **WHOLE** story?

People are always asking that question!--They want to know the **TRUTH** behind the headlines--to feel the love and tenderness--the tragedy and torment which the cold print of a **NEWS ITEM** cannot describe!

**ROMANCE MAGAZINE! TO BRING YOU THE REAL STORIES OF REAL PEOPLE--**  
HOUR OF

**WATCH FOR IT  
--READ IT--  
ENJOY IT**

**YOUNG BRIDES** **PRIZE** **young** 10¢  
**Brides**  
**TRUE LOVE SECRETS**

**PROUDLY**  
PRESENTED BY  
THE EDITORS OF  
**YOUNG  
ROMANCE  
and  
YOUNG LOVE**

**ASK YOUR FAVORITE  
NEWSDEALER TO RESERVE  
THIS FIRST GREAT ISSUE!**

**Everyone of us lives in two worlds!**

ONE OF THEM WE ACCEPT AS REALITY--  
IN THE OTHER, WE WANDER AS BAFFLED  
STRANGERS, WITNESSING SCENES WE  
CANNOT UNDERSTAND!

**WE WILL BUY YOUR DREAMS!**

The world of your dreams is a strange and fantastic  
place where the unpredictable is the normal..

WHERE THE FAMILIAR BECOMES THE GROTESQUE!-- WHERE HATE  
BURNS LIKE THE FIRE OF HADES AND LOVE IS AN EMOTION THAT  
SWEEPS THROUGH THE ENTIRE SOUL! IT'S A BIZARRE, OUTLANDISH  
WORLD WHICH WE SHARE WITH THE NIGHT!

**HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME**

**CAPTURED ON PAPER, DRAMATIZED AND  
ILLUSTRATED, ARE THE STRANGE SCENES  
OF OUR JOURNEYS INTO SLEEP WHICH  
AFFECT EVEN OUR WAKING HOURS!**

**NOW** YOU CAN SEE THEM IN THE LIGHT  
OF DAY AND KNOW THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE  
IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE!



**WE WILL BUY YOUR DREAMS!** (See inside for details.)

*Ask your Newsdealer  
to reserve your copy*

**READ THIS FASCINATING AND ABSORBING NEW COMIC MAGAZINE!**

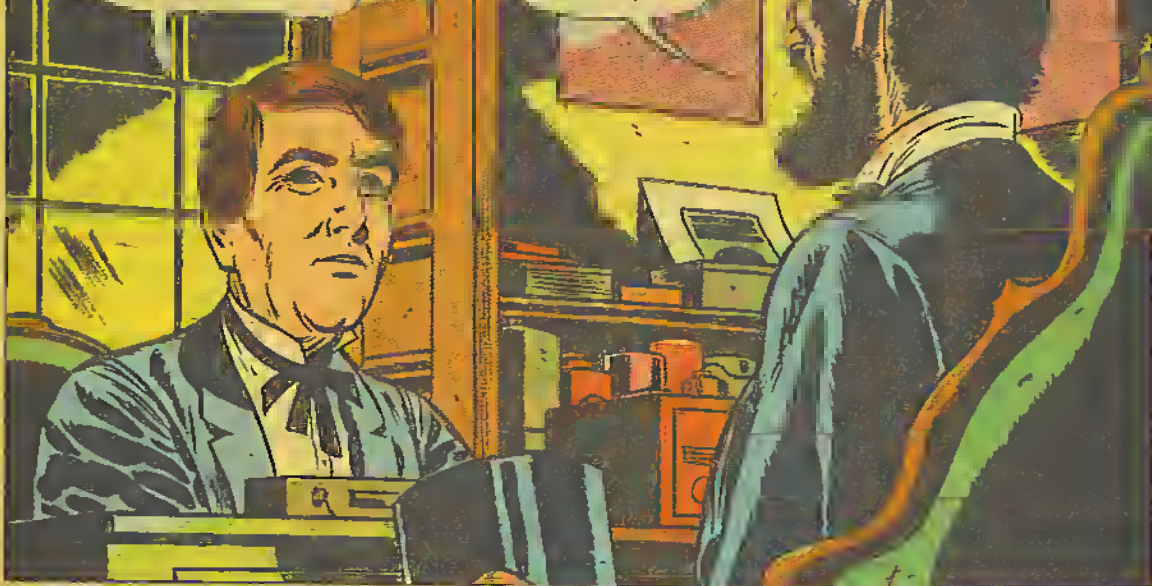


## The MIND READER

The true account of a man who  
claimed to have obnormal powers  
--and of a scientist who scoffed  
at these claims!

PEOPLE SAY THAT YOU CAN  
READ THE THOUGHTS OF  
MEN! TELL ME -- WHAT  
AM I THINKING?

YOU ARE  
THINKING --  
THAT I AM  
A FRAUD!



THOMAS A. EDISON, AS WE ALL KNOW,  
WAS A MAN OF SCIENCE, ONE OF THE  
RARE GENIUSES OF HISTORY. WHEN THIS  
COMBINATION LED TO THE SUPERNATURAL,  
EDISON WAS AN OUTSPOKEN SKEPTIC!

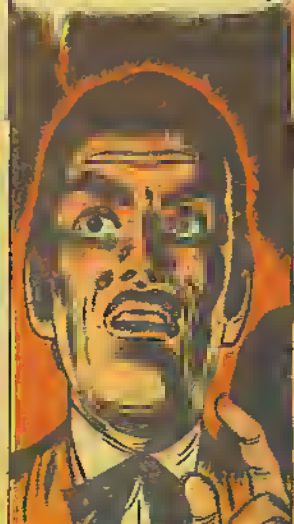
YOU ARE THE GREATEST  
INVENTOR OF OUR TIME,  
MR. EDISON... I OFTEN  
WONDER IF THERE IS  
SOME SUPERNATURAL  
FACTOR GUIDING THE  
MEN LIKE YOURSELF!

I AM NOT A  
WIZARD, MY  
FRIEND! SCIENCE  
IS A MATTER OF  
COLD CALCULATION,  
INTENSE REASON-  
ING ABILITIES --  
NOTHING MORE!

AM I TO ASSUME,  
MR. EDISON,  
THAT YOU HOLD  
NO BELIEF IN  
PERSONS WITH  
UNCANNY --  
UNEXPLAINABLE  
POWERS?

YOU ARE  
SPEAKING  
OF WITCH-  
CRAFT, SIR --  
TRICKERY  
AND FRAUD!  
NOTHING  
MORE!

THEN HOW DO YOU  
EXPLAIN BERT REESE?



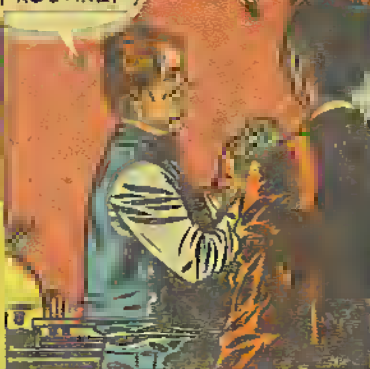


# BLACK MAGIC

THOMAS EDISON SCOFFED AT THE MENTION OF THE MAN WHO WAS IN THOSE EARLY 1900'S THE SUBJECT OF MUCH CONVERSATION! BERT REESE WAS A FAMED WONDER WORKER OF THAT PERIOD, WHO BOASTED OF MANY BACKERS AND WITNESSES TO HIS AWESOME PERFORMANCES!

THE MAN IS CLEVER, BUT HE IS STRICTLY A PERFORMER WITH A GOOD ROUTINE!

HE IS MORE THAN THAT, SIR! I HAVE SEEN BERT REESE IN OPERATION... THE MAN IS UNCANNY!



EITHER TO SATISFY HIS CURIOSITY, OR TO EXPOSE THE FAMOUS WIZARD, EDISON AGREED TO MEET HIM, AND PERFORM AN EXPERIMENT! WHEN THE TWO CELEBRITIES MET, THE INVENTOR OUTLINED HIS PLAN!

YOU SAY YOU CAN READ MEN'S MINDS, MR. REESE! CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT I AM THINKING?

I CAN, MR. EDISON! WRITE YOUR QUESTION ON A SLIP OF PAPER, SO THERE WILL BE NO DOUBT AS TO THOUGHT YOU HOLD IN YOUR MIND!

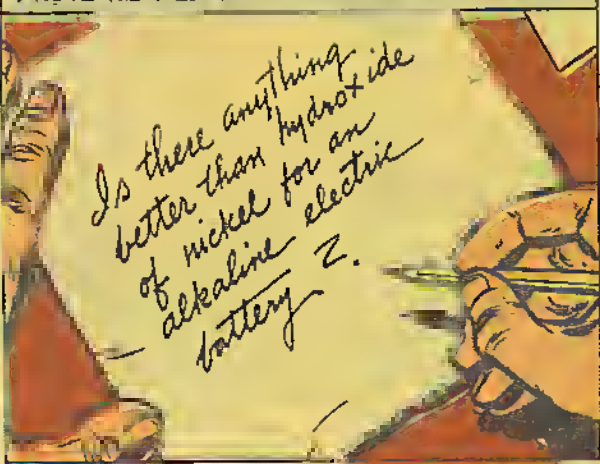


I SHALL DO SO... BUT NOT IN THIS ROOM! I WILL NOT GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO READ WHAT I AM WRITING!

THAT IS AGREEABLE!



REESE SETTLED BACK PATIENTLY, WHILE EDISON WENT TO ANOTHER ROOM, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE HOUSE! THERE, ALONE AND CONFIDENT, HE WROTE HIS MESSAGE!



Is there anything better than hydroxide of nickel for an alkaline electric battery?

MOMENTS LATER, EDISON RETURNED TO THE ROOM WHERE REESE WAS WAITING!

THERE IS NOTHING BETTER THAN HYDROXIDE OF NICKEL FOR AN ELECTRIC BATTERY!



IN 1915 THOMAS EDISON REPORTED THE DEMONSTRATION IN ONE OF THE LEADING SCIENTIFIC MAGAZINES OF THAT ERA... TO THE END OF HIS DAYS HE WAS NEVER ABLE TO EXPLAIN THIS INCIDENT... CAN YOU?

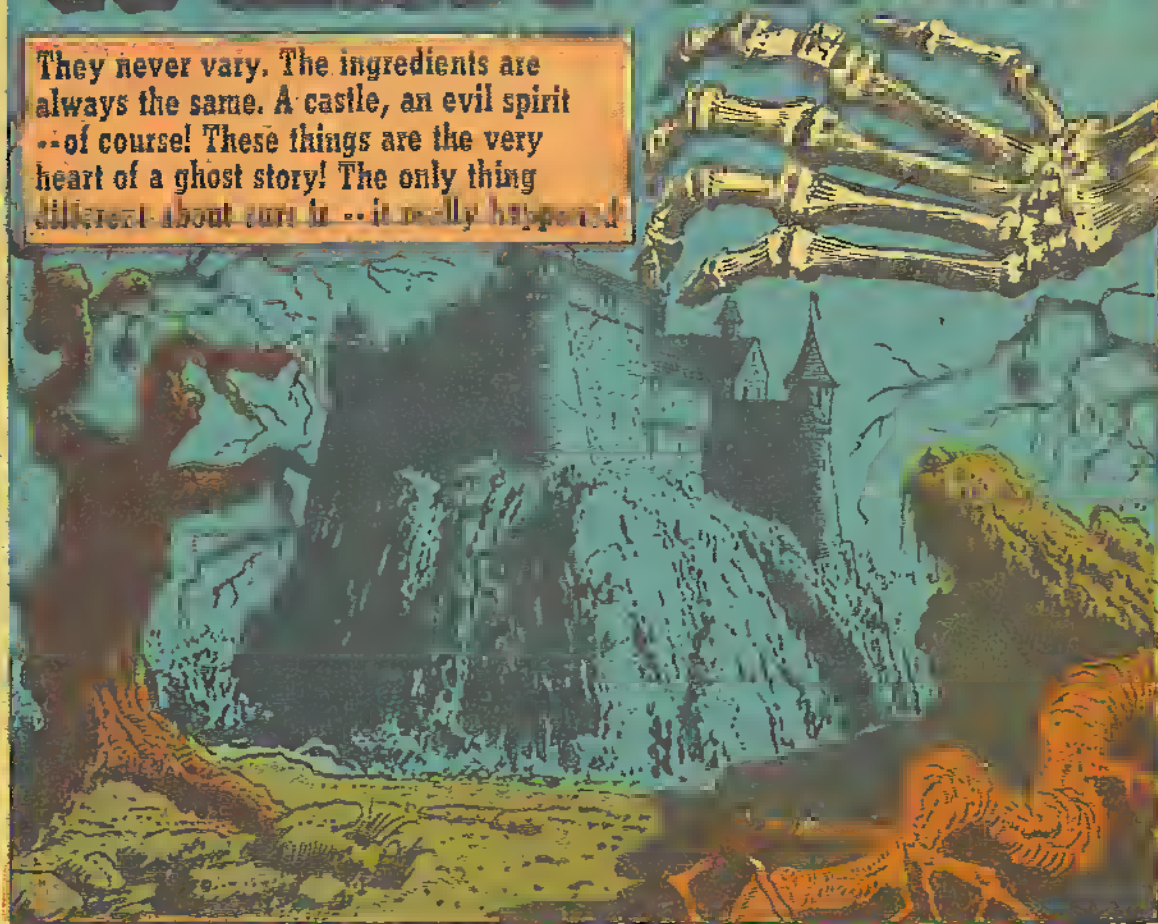


END



## A GHOST STORY!

They never vary. The ingredients are always the same. A castle, an evil spirit -- of course! These things are the very heart of a ghost story! The only thing different about ours is -- it really happened!



IT'S SO SIMPLE, ISN'T IT? GHOSTS? HUMBUG! WHO BELIEVES IN SUCH THINGS! CERTAINLY STEVEN PORTER DID NOT, TWENTY YEARS AGO! IF HE HAD, HE'D NEVER HAVE BOUGHT MACE CASTLE, ON THE COAST OF ENGLAND! BUT THEN, STEVEN PORTER FELT JUST AS YOU DO...

SO THAT'S SIR CHARLES MACE, THE RED BARON HIMSELF, EH? NO OFFENSE, SIR PHILIP, BUT NASTY LOOKING CHARACTER, WASN'T HE? NO WONDER I'VE HEARD STORIES ABOUT HIS HAUNTING MACE CASTLE!

IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT, MISTER PORTER. I'M NOT PROUD OF MY ANCESTOR! THAT'S WHY HIS PORTRAIT IS DOWN HERE, BUT THE STORIES ARE QUITE TRUE. I ASSURE YOU.



SURE! AND ELEPHANTS CAN FLY! I'M AFRAID I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS! STILL, I'M GRATEFUL TO THE OLD BOY! THANKS TO HIM, I'VE BOUGHT MACE CASTLE AT A BARGAIN! YOU MIGHT HAVE HELD ME UP!

DAD! YOU'RE NOT BEING VERY NICE!

YOUR FATHER IS A BUSINESSMAN, MISS PORTER. HE'S

BEING HONEST! SO THE LEAST I CAN DO IS BE JUST AS HONEST!





# BLACK MAGIC 2.

FRANKLY, MISTER PORTER... I'D HAVE SOLD FOR LESS! I HATE THIS PLACE! MACE CASTLE IS A BLOOD-STAINED CANCER THAT'S BEEN GROWING FOR THE THREE HUNDRED YEARS THE RED BARON HAS WALKED IT HALLS!

WELL! YOU ARE HONEST! I LIKE THAT, MACE! BUT SINCE WE'RE BEING FRANK, COME NOW... YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE THIS PLACE IS HAUNTED!

I KNOW IT IS! THREE CENTURIES AGO MY ANCESTOR USED THIS VERY DUNGEON FOR VILE RITES! HE KILLED, TORTURED! HE WAS A DEVIL! I'M GLAD TO BE RID OF MACE CASTLE... AND OF HIM!



FOR YEARS HE DID HIS EVIL WORK! THEN, HE VANISHED! THE STORY IS THAT HIS OWN SERVANTS MURDERED HIM AT LAST! HIS BODY WAS NEVER FOUND... BUT HIS BLACK SPIRIT IS STILL HERE, WITHIN THESE WALLS!

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHY I BOUGHT THIS PLACE! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO OWN A SO-CALLED HAUNTED CASTLE! BUT AS FOR BELIEVING THAT GHOSTS ARE REAL... WE'RE NOT CHILDREN, MACE!

NO, WE'RE NOT... AND YET... DAD, I DON'T LIKE THIS PLACE! PLEASE, CAN'T YOU POSTPONE YOUR INSPECTION UNTIL TOMORROW?

NONSENSE, CAROL! I FIND ALL THIS... FASCINATING! TELL ME, MACE, WHAT'S THIS CONTRADICTION? IT SEEMS TO BE RUSTED SHUT!



IT HAS BEEN EVER SINCE I WAS BORN! IT'S CALLED AN IRON LADY... INSIDE THE LID THERE ARE SHARP IRON SPIKES! A VICTIM WAS PLACED INSIDE, THE LID CLOSED... WELL THE REST YOU CAN IMAGINE!

HOW HORRIBLE! DAD, I... I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS! I HAVE SUCH AN ODD FEELING! AS IF SOMEONE WERE WATCHING ME!

THE RED BARON, CAROL? I'M SURPRISED AT YOU! THERE'S NO ONE HERE BUT US! YOU KNOW THAT!

US... AND THE MEMORY OF A MAN WHO DELIGHTED IN TORTURING YOUNG GIRLS TO DEATH, MISTER PORTER! SOMETIMES, OUR INSTINCTS ARE SHARPER THAN OUR REASON! I THINK WE'D BETTER GO BACK UPSTAIRS!





# BLACK MAGIC

THE HORROR WAS ALL ABOUT STEVEN PORTER THAT NIGHT, BUT IT HAD NOT YET TOUCHED HIM! THEREFORE, FOR HIM, IT DID NOT EXIST! NOT YET! IN THE GREAT HALLS ABOVE, HE SMILED TOLERANTLY...

OH, DAVIDS! I BELIEVE MISS PORTER IS FEELING A BIT FAINT! WOULD YOU FETCH SOME BRANDY, PLEASE!

CAROL! DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE BEGINNING TO BELIEVE ALL THIS FOOLISHNESS!



NO, NOT REALLY! DAD, THERE WAS SOMETHING DOWN THERE! I HATE TO SOUND LIKE A SUPERSTITIOUS BABY BUT I'M AFRAID! I... I THINK I'LL HAVE SUSAN SLEEP IN MY ROOM TONIGHT!

ALL RIGHT, BABY! YOUR MAID WOULD NOT BE MUCH GOOD TO YOU IF A GHOST DID SHOW UP... BUT IF IT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER, SURE! YOU DO THAT! NIGHT, HONEY!



TO STEVEN PORTER IT WAS ALL NONSENSE! HE TOO WENT TO BED SOON AFTER THAT! TO A DEEP, DREAMLESS SLEEP! IT WAS ONLY WHEN HE AWOKE IN THE MORNING THAT HIS NIGHTMARE BEGAN...

DAD! DAD, I CAN'T FIND SUSAN! WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING SHE WAS GONE!



DAVIDS AND SIR PHILIP HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR HER! BUT THEY CAN'T FIND HER! SHE'S DISAPPEARED!

DISAPPEARED? SHE PROBABLY JUST WENT OUT FOR A BREATH OF AIR! CAROL, CALM DOWN! YOU'RE HYSTERICAL!

BUT DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? THEY CAN'T FIND HER! NOT ANYWHERE! D-DAD, I'M FRIGHTENED! I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT I AM!

ALL THAT TALK... ABOUT GHOSTS AND TORTURE CHAMBER! LAST NIGHT WAS TOO MUCH FOR YOU! BUT THAT'S ALL IT WAS! TALK! COME ALONG! WE'LL FIND SUSAN!



BUT PORTER DID NOT FIND SUSAN! NOT PORTER, NOR SIR PHILIP MACE, NOR DAVIDS, THE BUTLER! NOT UNTIL MANY HOURS LATER...

NOTHING! I'VE BEEN CLEAR AROUND THIS BATTLEMENT, OR WHATEVER YOU CALL IT! SHE'S NOT OUT HERE! AND SHE'S NOT IN THE CASTLE! WE'VE

SHE HASN'T BEEN SEEN THERE, EITHER, SIR! BUT THERE'S STILL ONE PLACE WE HAVEN'T LOOKED! SIR PHILIP THOUGHT OF IT ON OUR WAY BACK! THE DUNGEONS!

WHERE! WHAT ABOUT THE VILLAGE?



THE DUNGEONS? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, DAVIDS! WHY WOULD ANY GIRL IN HER RIGHT MIND GO DOWN THERE ALONE, AT NIGHT?

A GIRL IN HER RIGHT MIND PROBABLY WOULDN'T! BUT WE'VE TRIED EVERY OTHER PLACE! LEGALLY, I STILL OWN MACE CASTLE! YOU HAVEN'T TAKEN OVER! I'M RESPONSIBLE! AND I'M WORRIED! WE MAY AS WELL HAVE A LOOK!

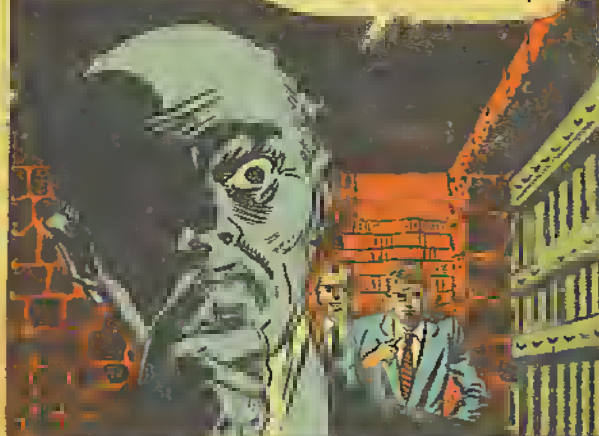




# BLACK MAGIC

GRUMBING, STEVEN PORTER LET HIMSELF BE LED... BUT IT WAS DAVIDS, NOT HE, WHO FOUND SUSAN...

SIR PHILIP! MR. PORTER! THERE... THERE!



NO... NO...



MERCIFUL, CAROL PORTER FAINTED, AND THE MEN WITH HER LEFT HER WHERE SHE FELL... WHILE THEY DID WHAT THEY HAD TO DO...

SHE'S DEAD! SHE'S BEEN TORTURED! HORRIBLY! THE RED BARON! IT WAS THE RED BARON!

DON'T BE A FOOL, MAN! GHOSTS DON'T KIDNAP PEOPLE OR COMMIT MURDER! THIS... THIS IS GHASTLY... BUT WHOEVER DID IT WAS FLESH AND BLOOD! LIKE US! LIKE US!



US? MR. PORTER! YOU'RE NOT SUGGESTING THAT ONE OF US DID THIS TERRIBLE THING!

I'M NOT SUGGESTING ANYTHING... BUT WE'RE A LONG WAY FROM THE CITY! IT WILL TAKE THE POLICE HOURS TO GET HERE AFTER WE CALL THEM! UNTIL THEY ARRIVE, I'M STAYING WITH MY DAUGHTER! JUST IN CASE!



GHOSTS DO NOT MAIM, DO NOT KILL, STEVEN PORTER REASONED! SO HE EXPLAINED WHAT HE BELIEVED TO HIS DAUGHTER, LATER...

DAD, I... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! DAVIDS AND SIR PHILIP... HOW COULD YOU SUSPECT THEM?



WHY WOULD THEY DO SUCH A THING?

I DON'T KNOW! BUT IT HAD TO BE ONE OF THEM! PROBABLY MACE! MURDER SEEMS TO RUN IN HIS FAMILY! YOU GET SOME SLEEP! LOCK YOUR DOOR! IF YOU NEED ME,

I'LL BE RIGHT OUTSIDE ALL NIGHT!

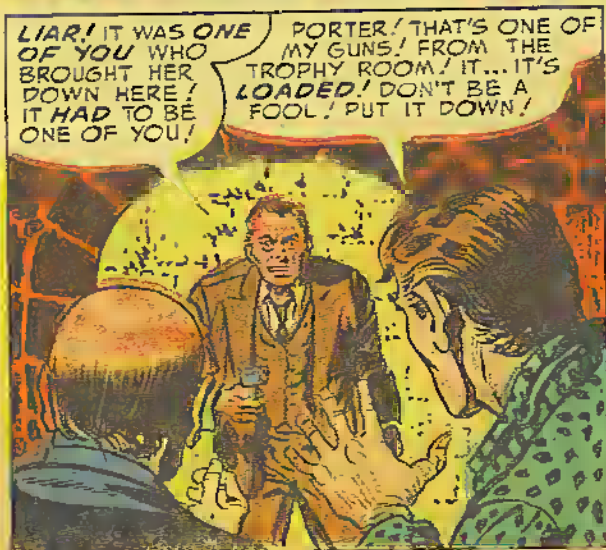
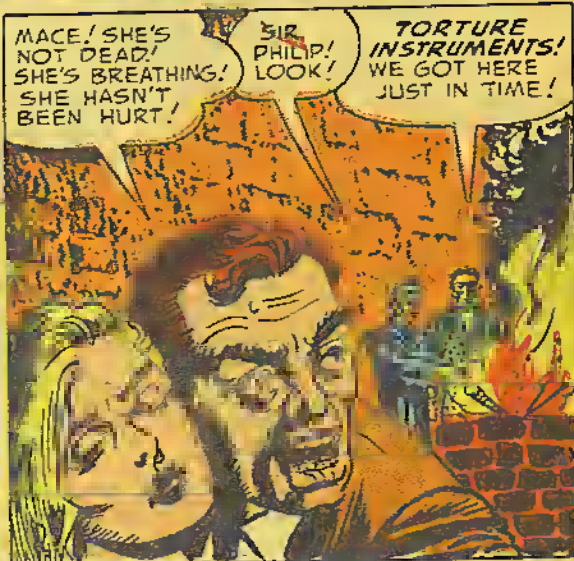
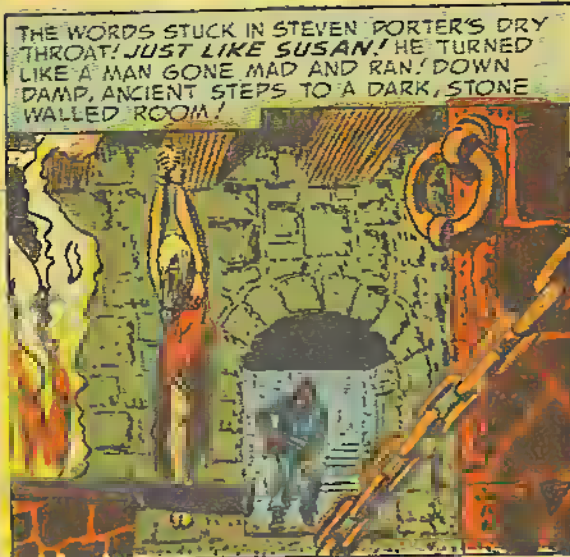


THE HOURS WERE LONG FOR STEVEN PORTER THAT NIGHT! LONG AND SILENT! SO THAT AT LAST SLEEP PRESSED HEAVILY ON HIS EYELIDS! HIS HEAD DROOPED... FOR THAT HE WILL NEVER FORGIVE HIMSELF...





# BLACK MAGIC





# BLACK MAGIC

THE RED BARON!  
THAT WAS THE RED  
BARON! THERE'S  
YOUR EXPLANATION!

NO! **WHATEVER** THAT  
THING WAS, IT WAS **REAL!**  
THAT'S WHAT KILLED SUSAN  
AND TRIED TO KILL CAROL!  
BUT IT WON'T KILL AGAIN!  
COME ON!

THREE MEN FOLLOWED A SHADOW... AND  
LOST IT IN A MAZE OF ODOROUS PASSAGE-  
WAYS! BUT THEY WERE TO FIND IT AGAIN!

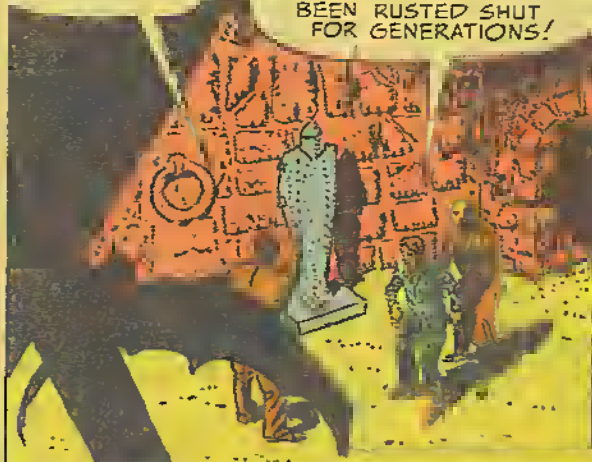
THERE! PORTER! THERE IT IS  
AGAIN! JUST GOING IN... AND  
YOUR DAUGHTER IS IN  
THERE!

I KNOW!



THE IRON LADY!  
IT WENT INTO THE  
IRON LADY!

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!  
IT **COULDN'T** BE IN  
THERE! THE LADY'S  
BEEN RUSTED SHUT  
FOR GENERATIONS!



I DON'T CARE **WHAT** YOU SAY! I SAW  
IT! BUT I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT NOW!  
ALL I CARE ABOUT IS MY DAUGHTER!  
CAROL! CAROL, BABY! IT'S  
ALL RIGHT NOW! OPEN  
YOUR EYES! PLEASE!

BUT CAROL PORTER DID NOT OPEN HER EYES!  
SHE WAS NOT TO OPEN THEM FOR DAYS! SO  
SHE WAS NOT PRESENT WHEN THE POLICE  
ARRIVED, WHEN A WORKMAN CUT INTO ANCIENT  
METAL!

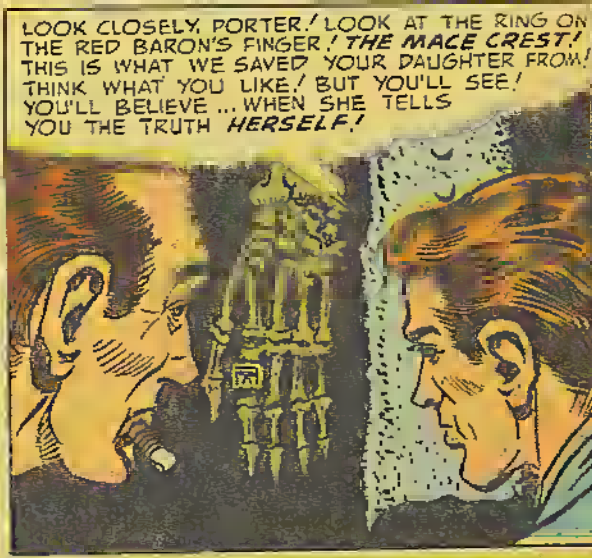
HERE SHE  
COMES, INSPECTOR!  
IT'S A **HEAVY**  
CONTRAPTION!

HEAVY AND **DEADLY**  
... AND NOW WE'LL  
SEE JUST HOW MUCH  
**TRUTH** THERE IS IN  
YOUR STORY, MISTER  
PORTER... AND HOW  
MUCH WAS OVER-  
WROUGHT IMAGINATION!





# BLACK MAGIC



BUT CAROL PORTER NEVER TOLD THE TRUTH! ALL THAT WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO AND NO ONE HAS EVER LEARNED WHO OR WHAT CARRIED HER TO THE DUNGEONS THAT NIGHT...

CAROL PORTER HAS STARED LIKE THAT FOR TWENTY YEARS! AT NOTHING! BUT WHETHER IT WAS A LIVING THING... OR A CREATURE DEAD THREE HUNDRED YEARS, WHICH DESTROYED HER MIND, NO ONE KNOWS! NOR EVER WILL...

